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BUREAU OF  
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CURRENT  
ANALYSES

(U) SOVIET RELATIONS WITH THE NORDIC STATES<sup>1/</sup>

(C/NF) Summary

Moscow's current efforts to play on Nordic security concerns and to dilute NATO's role in the region center on promoting the idea of a Nordic Nuclear Weapons Free Zone (NNWFZ) and opposition to intermediate-range nuclear forces (INF) deployment. Since Finnish President Kekkonen proposed the NNWFZ in 1963, the Soviets periodically have refurbished the concept to generate Nordic interest. They no doubt realize, however, that progress on that score peaked in 1980-82 when the ruling Norwegian Labor Party endorsed an NNWFZ provided that it was part of Europe-wide arms control negotiations and that Soviet weapons and bordering territory were included.

In 1982, the Social Democratic Party regained power in Sweden and Prime Minister Palme suggested an NNWFZ if the USSR withdrew its nuclear missiles from the Baltic. Moscow recognized at least an opportunity to complicate Norwegian relations with NATO and began casting out hints of possible Soviet concessions.

Elections in Norway and Denmark of Conservative governments that opposed the NNWFZ concept effectively sidetracked the issue. The grounding of a Soviet submarine carrying nuclear missiles in Swedish territorial waters in fall 1981, a spate of submarine incursions in Swedish and Norwegian waters in 1982 and 1983 and the ensuing April 1983 Swedish Government report, and the September 1983 Korean

<sup>1/</sup> (U) For a detailed study of Soviet-Nordic relations, see "Soviet-Nordic Relations: An Overview," INR Report No. 408-AR, June 11, 1982 (SECRET/NOFORN/NOCONTRACT/ORCON).

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airliner incident further clouded Soviet-Nordic relations. Moscow nevertheless is pursuing the NNWFZ idea, usually as a subsidiary to its more immediate effort to stimulate greater anti-INF activity by local peace groups as NATO INF deployments begin.

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Cooling of Soviet-Nordic Relations

(C) In 1980-82, signs of Scandinavian interest in some form of NNWFZ seemed to promise an expanded Nordic-Soviet dialogue and opportunities for Moscow to erode NATO's influence in the area. However, the submarine violations of Scandinavian territory and leadership changes in Norway, Denmark, and Finland put a quick end to any optimism in Moscow.

(C) In Norway, Labor Party Prime Minister Brundtland, who had toyed with the idea of an NNWFZ, was replaced by the Conservative Willoch. Danish Social Democratic Prime Minister Jorgensen was succeeded by a Conservative, Schleuter. Both Willoch and Schleuter oppose negotiations with the Soviet Union on an NNWFZ. Willoch's argument that only nuclear powers can set up nuclear free zones prompted TASS to express "regret."

(C) After 25 years' reliance on Kekkonen's careful course of friendly neutrality toward the USSR, Moscow in October 1981 faced a successor. Although Mauno Koivisto has shown no signs of altering Kekkonen's basic policy course and has restated Helsinki's support of the "Kekkonen Plan," Moscow still views him as an unknown quantity. Helsinki has carefully avoided identification with the Swedish or Norwegian Labor Party proposals.

(C) After repeated violation of both Norwegian and Swedish territorial waters by suspected Soviet submarines, particularly invasion of Sweden's military base at Stockholm in October 1982, the Swedish Government Commission on April 26, 1983, formally charged the Soviet Union with such violations. Palme then gave Moscow a stiff protest note asking that violations cease; the note was rejected.

(C) The Swedish Commission's report proved the most damaging development in the past year to Soviet credibility in the Nordic area. The report alleged numerous violations of Swedish territorial waters by Soviet submarines over the preceding two years and prompted Palme not only to lodge the formal protest with the Soviet Government but also to cancel all planned visits by Swedish political and military officials to the USSR. The Soviets shortly before had hailed Palme for his proposal of a nuclear free strip in Central Europe between NATO and Warsaw Pact lines and had been heartened by his support of an NNWFZ.

(C) The Swedish population reacted with outrage to the Commission's findings and was further incensed by Moscow's denial and

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charge that Stockholm was serving NATO interests by trying to aggravate tension in the Nordic region. Soviet media for their part dismissed the charges as paranoia and accused Sweden of using the allegation as an excuse to build up Swedish defenses, increase NATO's influence in the region, and neutralize the local peace movements.

(C) Danish skepticism about Soviet peace propaganda also increased markedly after the Swedish Commission's report, and the Danish Social Democratic Party canceled a scheduled visit to Moscow of a parliamentary delegation. Although Danish waters are too shallow for normal submarine operation, stories about the penetration abilities of Soviet "minisubs" have generated uneasiness in the Danish public.

(C/NF) At their meeting on April 26, 1983, the Nordic defense ministers declared that Soviet actions represented a threat to all Nordic countries. The unique political position of Finland and its mutual defense treaty with the Soviet Union inhibited the Finns from taking any stance against Moscow, and President Koivisto's visit to the Soviet Union took place on schedule in early June.

(C) Sweden has not been alone in sighting suspected Soviet submarines in its territorial waters. Intrusions into Norwegian waters also have taken place periodically. Indeed, at the time the Swedish Commission issued its report, the Norwegian Navy had just dropped depth charges on a suspected foreign submarine in Hardangerfjord. Norway's NATO membership and its proximity to the Soviet Union traditionally have meant particular Soviet sensitivity to any augmentation of NATO northern flank activity and the stockpiling of NATO military equipment on Norwegian soil. Soviet media often remind the Norwegian public of the risk entailed in allowing any NATO buildup in Northern Europe. Soviet violation of Norwegian waters thus was interpreted variously as a Soviet reposte to Norway's more active role in NATO or as retaliation for an earlier NATO warship visit to Norway's Haakonsvern Navy Base.

(C) Moscow Persists in Promoting NNWFZ

Despite, or perhaps because of, the cooler atmosphere, Moscow has persisted with NNWFZ promotion and made several attempts to increase its attractiveness. Although Brezhnev in 1981 offered merely to consider "some measures" applying to Soviet territory in the region adjoining an NNWFZ, Soviet Defense Ministry arms control spokesman General Chervov went somewhat further last March when he hinted at Soviet willingness to keep USSR nuclear-armed submarines out of the Baltic area. Andropov on May 10 then told a visiting Finnish group that the USSR was prepared to consider "quite substantial" measures, implying inclusion of Soviet

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territory adjacent to an NNWFZ. At a June 6 dinner for Koivisto he went even further, asserting that the Soviets also would be prepared to discuss inclusion of the Baltic Sea in an NNWFZ.

The embellishments found little resonance in Scandinavia. The Soviets can be expected to keep pressing the NNWFZ issue, however, and courting the Scandinavian public as opportunities arise. Even the mere start of discussions on the subject would serve their interest because they would view it as a step in the direction of their ultimate objective of clouding the Danish and Norwegian role in NATO in time of crisis.

(C/NF) Exploiting Anti-INF Sentiment

Although the Nordic NATO members (Norway, Denmark, and Iceland) are not basing countries in NATO's INF modernization plan, Moscow has actively cultivated left-wing organizations and peace activists in these countries in order to bring anti-INF pressure to bear on the ruling governments. Prime targets have been the INF opponents within Norway's Labor Party and Denmark's Social Democratic Party (SDP).

Norway's opposition Labor Party almost succeeded in overturning a parliamentary vote in November 1982 on Norway's contribution to INF infrastructure funding. But the Swedish Commission's report, periodic searches for suspected Soviet submarines, and the KAL downing have appreciably eroded popular backing for the anti-nuclear movement. Moreover, Moscow's image suffered further damage from a Norwegian commission's report issued in August on the Hardangerfjord submarine intrusion. This report recommended measures to enhance Norwegian ability to respond to similar future occurrences.

Regardless of decreased popularity, Moscow will continue to encourage the anti-nuclear movement in Norway but probably has little expectation of altering the government's stand, at least as long as Willoch remains in power. Willoch is a strong supporter of the US position at the Geneva INF talks and has drawn heavy criticism from Soviet media for that reason. Moscow was particularly annoyed by his March interview with a Finnish newspaper in which he claimed that the USSR had violated nonaggression pacts with Finland, Poland, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania during World War II. Soviet media accused him of resorting to anti-Soviet statements aimed at marring Soviet-Finnish relations.

Moscow probably sees somewhat brighter prospects in Denmark. The SDP has succeeded in blocking a Danish contribution to INF deployment. Last May it pushed through a parliamentary resolution calling on the government to seek postponement of INF deployment while the Geneva talks continued and brought the Schleuter

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government near to collapse. Although Schleuter supports the NATO double-track decision, he is compelled by this resolution to advance the views of the opposition, weakening his own stand.

Moscow has hailed the SDP's success and depicts the public opposition to deployment in Denmark (60 percent opposed) as signs of Alliance disunity; but its effectiveness in promoting anti-INF sentiment has been undercut in Denmark, as it has in the other Nordic countries, by the KAL incident and submarine incursions.

(C/NF) Outlook

Recent Soviet actions seem to indicate that Moscow is taking steps to repair some of the damage to its relations with the Nordic states. Danish Foreign Minister Elleman-Jensen's October 31-November 1 visit to Moscow--at Soviet invitation--suggests some forward movement, although Moscow seems to have profited more by the Schleuter government's fear of being upstaged by an SDP delegation's visit to the USSR before its own than by any Danish desire to improve relations. (Hints at the time of Moscow's invitation suggested a possible rescheduling of the SDP trip, which had been canceled in May following issuance of the Swedish Commission's findings on submarine intrusions.) Although Elleman-Jensen's meeting with Soviet officials--including Gromyko--produced nothing new, it did provide Moscow with a chance to reiterate its views on international issues to both internal and foreign audiences.

The Soviets also are dropping hints about their "good intentions" toward Sweden. In an apparent attempt to allay Swedish fears about the submarine intrusions, Andropov included assurances of Soviet respect for Swedish borders in a September letter to Palme. The Swedes also have reported receiving assurances that the USSR would punish any commander who violated Swedish territory.

In any event, Moscow welcomes such positive signs as Palme's apparent interest in trying to improve Swedish-Soviet ties and the Danish Foreign Minister's visit--the first of a NATO foreign minister to Moscow since the KAL downing--as INF deployments begin. Any significant improvement of ties, however, seems remote.

Prepared by Anita Friedt  
632-8657

Approved by Martha Mautner  
632-9536

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